



# County of San Diego

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

JOHN L. SNYDER  
DIRECTOR

5201 RUFFIN ROAD, SUITE D  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123-4310  
(858) 694-2055 FAX: (858) 694-8928  
Web Site: [sdcdpw.org](http://sdcdpw.org)

RICHARD E. CROMPTON  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

## MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

April 10, 2009

Project Name: Sweetwater Phase III Trail

Project Number(s): COFD-00251

**This Document is Considered Draft Until it is Adopted by the Appropriate  
County of San Diego Decision-Making Body.**

This Mitigated Negative Declaration is comprised of this form along with the Environmental Initial Study that includes the following:

- a. Initial Study Form
  - b. Environmental Analysis Form and attached extended studies for Biological Resource.
1. California Environmental Quality Act Negative Declaration Findings:

Find, that this Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the decision-making body's independent judgment and analysis, and; that the decision-making body has reviewed and considered the information contained in this Mitigated Negative Declaration and the comments received during the public review period; and that revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the project applicant would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur; and, on the basis of the whole record before the decision-making body (including this Mitigated Negative Declaration) that there is no substantial evidence that the project as revised will have a significant effect on the environment.

2. Required Mitigation Measures:

Refer to the attached Environmental Initial Study for the rationale for requiring the following measures:

**Biological Resources**

- A. Impacts to southern willow riparian forest, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, southern willow scrub and coastal brackish marsh **within** the Sweetwater Onsite Mitigation Area (SWOMA) will be mitigated through restoration and enhancement of 0.131 acre of rogue trails (2:1 ratio) **within the SWOMA**. Restoration and enhancement will consist of trail closure and a replanting with native riparian species.
- B. Impacts to southern willow riparian forest, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, southern willow scrub and coastal brackish marsh **outside** of the SWOMA will be mitigated through restoration and enhancement of 0.313 acre of rogue trails (1:1 ratio) either **within or outside of** the SWOMA. Restoration and enhancement will consist of trail closure and a replanting with native riparian species.
- C. Vegetation removal, grading, clearing, and any construction-related activities are restricted during the breeding season (February 1 to September 15 of any year) within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) of natural habitat for types of raptors, least Bell's vireo, and other migratory birds. If a qualified biologist determines that no nesting birds are within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors), construction may proceed with written concurrence from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Biological monitoring is required during construction to evaluate the potential for indirect impacts to raptors, migratory birds, and other sensitive biological resources on site.

3. Critical Project Design Elements That Must Become Conditions of Approval:

The following project design elements were either proposed in the project application or the result of compliance with specific environmental laws and regulations and were essential in reaching the conclusions within the attached Environmental Initial Study. While the following are not technically mitigation measures, their implementation must be assured to avoid potentially significant environmental effects.

### **Aesthetics**

In addition to the requirements outlined in the Light Pollution Code, the proposed project will control outdoor lighting and sources of glare as follows:

- The project will not install outdoor lighting that directly illuminates neighboring properties.
- The project will not install outdoor lighting that would cast a direct beam angle toward a potential observer, such as a motorist, cyclist, or pedestrian.
- The project will not install outdoor lighting for vertical surfaces such as buildings, landscaping, or signs, in a manner that would result in useful light or spill light being cast beyond the boundaries of the intended area to be lit.
- The project will not install any highly reflective surfaces such as glare-producing glass or high-gloss surface color that will be visible along roadways, pedestrian walkways, or in the line of sight of adjacent properties.

### **Biological Resources**

The following design measures are incorporated into the proposed project and will serve to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources:

- Prior to the start of construction, all construction and staging area limits will be clearly identified with orange construction fencing to ensure that construction activities remain within the defined construction limits. A qualified biologist shall inspect the fencing prior to the start of construction and shall monitor activities during construction to avoid unauthorized impacts.
- During construction, all construction activities including, but not limited to, equipment storage, equipment cleaning, and stock piling, shall occur within the identified orange construction areas. All storage areas will be protected with the use of fiber rolls and/or silt fences. All construction staging areas shall be identified on site and construction plans.
- Natural drainage patterns will be maintained to the extent practicable during construction activities. Erosion control techniques, including the use of gravel

bags, hay bales, and/or the installation of sediment traps, will be incorporated into the erosion control plan for the proposed project.

- Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction activities, which include, but are not limited to, storm drain inlet protection, stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls shall be used to minimize surface transport of sediments. The construction contractor will be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Implementation of BMPs as stated in the contract and SWPPP would reduce water quality impacts to below a level of significance.
- The use of motorized vehicles on trails shall be prohibited, except for wheelchairs, maintenance, and emergency vehicles.
- Physical and/or visual barriers shall be incorporated to protect sensitive habitats, sensitive species, and wetland habitats by directing users to designated trails using natural vegetation, topography, limited fencing, trail markers and signage.
- Foot traffic, equestrian activity, and bicycling are allowed only on designated trails.
- Dogs must be leashed at all times and are restricted to designated trails.
- To prevent potential dust damage to vegetation in the conserved habitat, spraying the construction site with water shall be conducted on an as-needed basis.
- The release or transplantation of non-native animals, fish, or vegetation is prohibited. No collection of plants, plant material, wildlife, or historical artifacts is allowed.
- Trail lighting should not be permitted within wildlife habitat except where essential for roadways, facility use, and safety. Lighting within wildlife habitat or along its edges should be limited to low pressure sodium sources directed away and shielded from wildlife habitat.
- Trails within the SWOMA will be reduced from 12 feet to 5 feet in order to minimize impacts to the mitigation area.

**Water Quality**

- As part of the proposed project, an erosion control plan will be implemented with erosion control techniques, including the use of gravel bags, hay bales, and/or the installation of sediment traps. In addition, Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction activities to avoid water quality impacts, polluted runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. BMPs include, but are not limited to, storm drain inlet protection, stabilized construction entrance/exit areas, and silt fencing. Silt fences and fiber rolls will be used to minimize surface transport of sediments. The construction contractor will be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

**ADOPTION STATEMENT:** This Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted and above California Environmental Quality Act findings made by the:

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on \_\_\_\_\_

NELSON E. OLIVAS, LUEG Program Manager  
Regulatory Planning Division

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